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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [CG](#) [ELECTIONS](#)
SUBJECT: DRC'S BEMBA FORMS NEW ALLIANCE TO COUNTER KABILA

REF: A. KINSHASA 1487

[1](#)B. KINSHASA 1485

[1](#)C. KINSHASA 1471

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: DR Congo Vice President Bemba announced September 23 the creation of a new political alliance, the Union for the Nation (UN). It appears unlikely to bolster significantly his electoral prospects in the October 29 presidential vote. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Congolese Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba announced September 23 the formation of a new alliance, the Union for the Nation (UN). UN brings together many of the same 25 parties making up the Rally of Congolese Nationalists (RENACO) that supported Bemba during the first round of elections. It also includes a number of minor former presidential candidates, many drawn from the so-called "Group of 19" that had demanded "political dialogue" in advance of the July 30 vote.

[1](#)3. (U) In announcing UN's formation, Bemba condemned talk of dividing the country along regional or ethnic lines, and outlined his vision for the new coalition and the DRC. He called the East-West division fictitious. He said UN aims to be non-exclusive and to put forward leaders capable of restoring the dignity of the Congolese people. He appealed to voters who abstained from the July 30 elections to vote in the October 29 runoff.

[1](#)4. (U) Nine candidates who totaled less than four percent of the first-round vote were among those who signed on with the new alliance: Joseph Olenghankoy, Catherine Nzuzi, Roger Lumbala, Justine Kasavubu, Wivine Nlandu, Pierre Matusila, Gerard Kamanda wa Kamanda, and Raphael Mbuyi. Bemba's first-round vote was 20 percent, Kabila's 45 percent.

[1](#)5. (SBU) According to one report, high-ranking members of both the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) (ref A) and Oscar Kashala's Union for the Reconstruction of the Congo (UREC) also signed a document supporting Bemba's candidacy (septel). Some were seen in the audience at the announcement of the new alliance in Kinshasa. A UDPS statement signed September 25 by Secretary General Remy Masamba and National Committee President Valentin Mubake stated clearly that the party supported neither Bemba nor Kabila. A subsequent declaration in support of Bemba was issued on September 26 by some UDPS members, suggesting a split in the party (septel). A spokesman for Kashala was quoted in the Kinshasa press as saying his party had not joined UN either.

¶6. (C) Comment: UN is clearly aimed at countering the growing strength of the Kabila-affiliated Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP) (ref C), but those who are joining Bemba bring little electoral clout with them, and promise little to improve his chances. For all Bemba's talk of a unified Congo, most of the new candidates and parties joining with RENACO to create UN are based in Western Congo. The new alliance clearly aspires to be an "Anyone but Kabila" coalition, but without Antoine Gizenga's PALU (ref B) and Nzanga Mobutu's UDEMO, it looks less like a coherent political force than a collection of sore losers. End comment.

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